

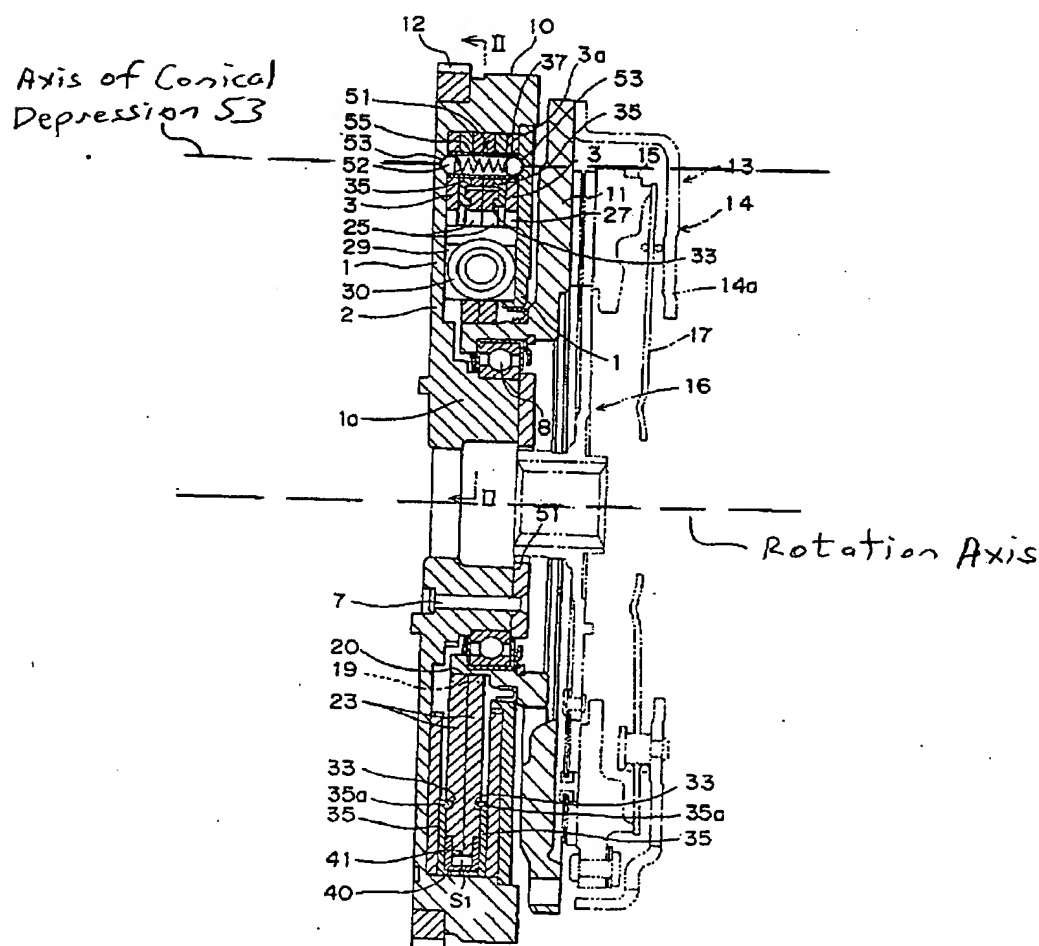
REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this application.

Claims 2 and 5-13 are pending, with Claims 2, 5, 7, and 9 being independent. In the outstanding Office Action, independent Claims 5 and 7 were again rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Fukushima (USP 5,269,198). Independent Claim 2 was again rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Reik (USP 5,680,918). Independent Claim 9 was again rejected over Fukushima, although the ground for rejection has been changed to obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections for the reasons discussed below.

In Applicants' Amendment Accompanying Request for Continued Examination dated October 31, 2007, Claims 5 and 7 were amended to recite that the conical peripheral friction surface of the damper's ring member is coaxial with a rotation axis of the damper assembly. The outstanding Office Action contends that "at least the portions of surfaces 53 located in the same plane as the rotation axis of the damper would meet this limitation." Office Action at page 7. Although the intent of the foregoing passage is not entirely clear to Applicants, it will be appreciated from

the following sketch of Fukushima's Fig. 1 that Fukushima's conical depressions 53 do not meet the aforementioned feature of Claims 5 and 7. In particular, it will be seen that each depression 53 has an axis that is parallel to, and not coaxial with, the rotation axis of the assembly.



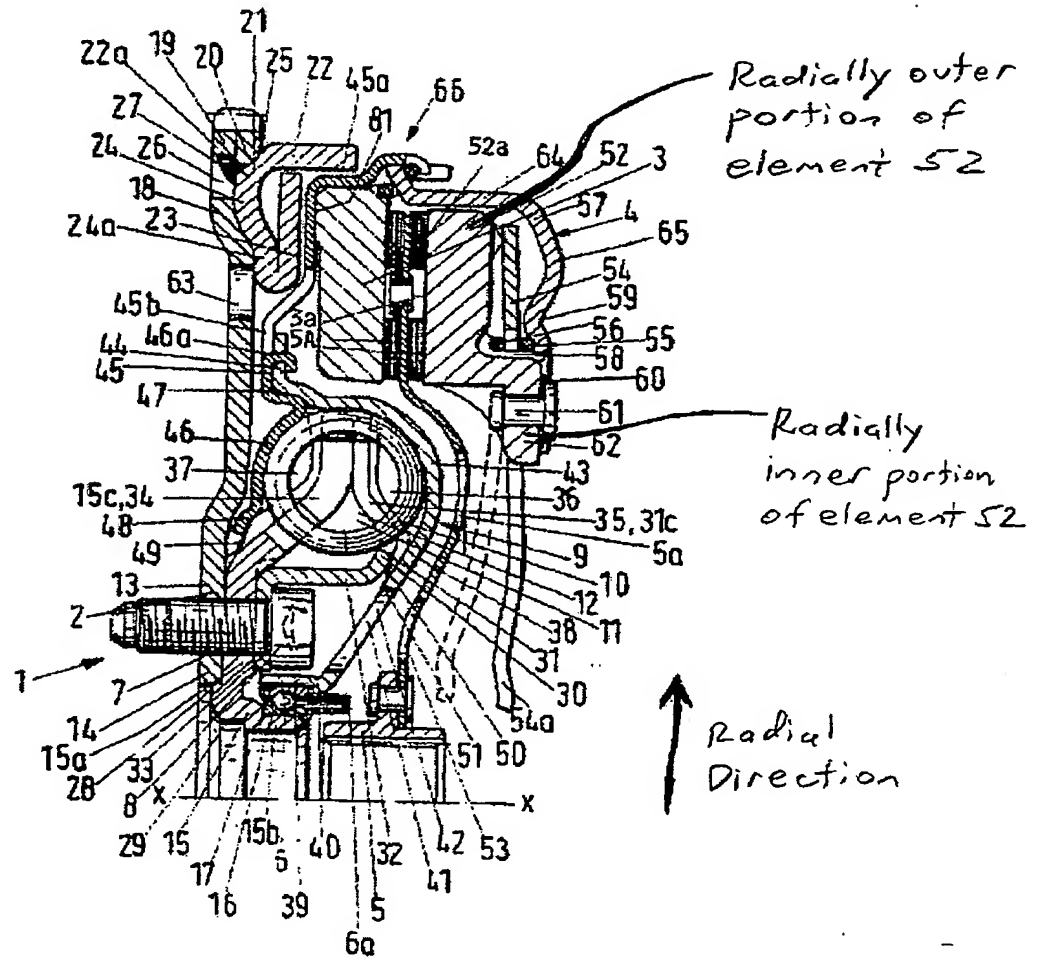
Fukushima Fig. 1

Applicants further argued in the previous Amendment that the surfaces of Fukushima's balls 52 are spherical, not conical. In response, the Office contended "that the depressions 53 are conical in shape [and] constitute a conical periphery at least at those depression surfaces" (emphasis added). Office Action at page 8. As is apparent, the foregoing passage addresses Fukushima's depressions 53, not balls 52. Fukushima evidently teaches the engagement of a conical depression and spherical surface (ball), whereas Claim 7 clearly calls for the engagement of two conical surfaces. Fukushima's ball 52, while contacting a conical depression, does not itself provide a conical surface.

For at least the foregoing reasons, the rejection of Claims 5 and 7 is untenable and should be withdrawn.

Independent Claim 2 was most recently amended to recite that the press plate has a radially outermost peripheral portion spline engaged with a radially inner peripheral portion of a torque transmitting member. The outstanding Office Action contended that "the portion of element 52 in which bolt 61 passes therethrough is still readable as a radially outermost portion . . . this portion of element 52 would extend at the outermost end of the structure." Office Action at page 9. However, as will be appreciated from the

following sketch of Reik's Fig. 1, rivet 61 actually passes through a radially inner portion of element 52.



Reik Fig. 1

Accordingly, the aforementioned amendment to Claim 2 clearly distinguishes from the arrangement shown in Reik.

In the preceding Amendment, Applicants further observed that substitution of a spline connection in place of the riveted connection in Reik would eliminate the riveted connection of leaf springs 60 and is therefore

contraindicated. The Office responded that "the substitution of a spline connection for the riveted connection would merely provide an alternate means of attaching the leaf springs to the assembly of Reik or provide a completely alternate type of connection altogether which would not be beyond the realm of one of ordinary skill in the art to employ." Office Action at page 9. It is not seen, however, nor has the Office suggested, how a spline connection could be used as a means of attaching the leaf springs in Reik. Moreover, there is nothing in the art of record to suggest the provision of "a completely alternate type of connection" as a substitute for the riveted connection of Reik's leaf springs, or what form such a connection—if even possible—would have. If the Office intends to maintain this rationale, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner provide a sketch of an exemplary modification of Reik and an explanation as to how such structure is suggested by the prior art.

Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claim 2 be withdrawn for the reasons discussed above.

Finally, as to Claim 9, the continued rejection on Fukushima is not understood. Claim 9 specifically recites that the friction torque limiter includes a plurality of friction plates provided with wet-type friction material

which limits the torque that can be transmitted through the damper. The Office acknowledged that Fukushima provides torque limiting in a different manner than that of Applicants. Specifically, Fukushima teaches that torque is limited by an arrangement of cooperating conical depressions and spherical balls. Fukushima therefore does not teach or suggest Claim 9, in which the torque is limited by wet-type friction material provided to a plurality of friction plates.

Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claim 9 be withdrawn.

The rejections of dependent Claims 6, 8 and 10-13 should also be withdrawn, at least for the reasons discussed above with regard to their respective base claims.

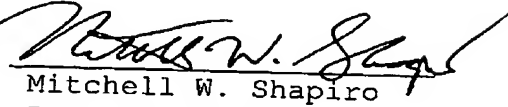
Accordingly, Applicants respectfully urge that this application now be passed to issue.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 (XA-9598) any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing

of this paper and has not been separately requested, such extension is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

By:

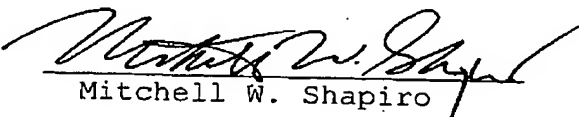
  
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July 16, 2008

CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office on July 16, 2008.

  
Mitchell W. Shapiro